

### WHAT IS HOME WITHOUT A MOTHER

This is the Theme of "This Freedom," a New Story by the Author of "If Winter Comes"—A Warning to Married Women Who Persist in Clinging to Positions in the Business and Professional World.

By Prof. W. T. Allison.

Before his novel, "If Winter Comes," had become a phenomenal success, its author, A. S. M. Hutchinson, was working on another story dealing with one of the greatest social problems of our time, the protection of the home in face of the influx of the up-to-date woman into business, professional and political spheres of activity. Can a woman who persists in carrying out for herself a "career" do her duty by husband and children? Almost every man would at once reply "Certainly not!" Mr. Hutchinson himself, while sympathizing with woman's struggle for equality, believes that the average man is right in looking askance at modern Eve who wants a husband and a position too. He has therefore built up his new novel, "This Freedom," to impress this unconventional generation with the fact that the old way was best and the old-fashioned expression, "What is home without a mother?" still deserves to be uttered not as a question but as a self-evident statement of eternal truth. Suppose woman has achieved the suffrage and can enter all kinds of occupations today, if she marries and has children and neglects her family for business on the pretext that she should be as free to follow her ambition as her husband, the day will come when she will quote the words of the apostle but in dejection instead of in triumph, "With a great sin I obtained I this freedom!"

#### Victorian Girl's Passion for Business.

The plot of this novel with a purpose is very simple. It is the biography of Rosalie Aubyn, youngest child in a large family in a rectory in Suffolk. Her father, the Rev. Harold Aubyn had been a brilliant student at Cambridge but he had been shunted off to a country parish with a salary of £20 a year. Then he struck year after year, unable to secure anything better. He hated the place and became soured and embittered. His gentle and uncomplaining wife was a thorough-going Victorian woman, a slave to her husband and children, and her monotonous life tormented her youngest daughter the early resolve to escape if possible from such a domestic treadmill, such a dependent existence. The opening chapters in this story offer humorous illustrations of how much more important were fathers and sons than wives and daughters in the good old days of Queen Victoria and how lowly and servicable were the latter to the former. Rosalie would never have escaped from the restrictions imposed upon her by the acid of birth had it not been for her Aunt Bella, Mrs. Pyke Pounce, of London, who played lady beautiful to the rector's family and was cordially hated by every one except her meek sister. Aunt Bella carried the little girl to London, for a number of years paid for her keep and tuition in a girl's school, and when she was graduated aided and abetted her in her ambition to become not a governess but a business woman. Through her aunt's influence, and much to the disgust of Pyke Pounce, who believed that girls should stick to the old paths, Rosalie obtained a place as private secretary to Mr. Simcox. This eccentric individual answered all kinds of advertisements in order that he might have the fun of opening a heap of letters every day. He entered into multitudinous correspondence with heads of colleges and schools, for instance, respecting the advantages to be obtained in their institution; insurance companies were also drawn into writing to him long letters explaining the merits of their various policies. In this way he became really expert in various lines of information. But as he had a private income, he made no use of

the fruits of his correspondence school. Rosalie, however, had not been in his office long before she saw that it was possible for him to become an adviser to parents who were perplexed as to where to send their children to school, likewise to men who wanted to insure but did not know what company or policy to select. Within a year, so wonderful was her business acumen, she and Mr. Simcox founded a good-paying business.

#### Rosalie Married a Genial Lawyer.

Rosalie's aim was being realized at last; she was going to be a free woman, one who could snap her fingers at the other sex and be absolutely independent. The years passed swiftly by and she prospered exceedingly, but when she was thirty-two she surprised herself by falling in love almost over night with a genial lawyer whom she had likened to a poor, lame cat. She married him, but made him promise that she should still be on an equal footing with him, as far as business was concerned. So he practised law and she became one of the bright lights of a private bank. Then children blessed this strange marriage and for a good many years Rosalie and her husband thought the youngsters were doing nicely in the hands of governesses and housekeepers. But by slow degrees evidence was forthcoming that it was not enough for their good-natured mother to be giving only her evenings and week-ends to her young family. She was always pleasant with them and she and her husband were never out of sorts, but somehow the girl and the two boys were always happy to go off to boarding-school, and never displayed any affection for their business-woman mother. A couple of times Rosalie broke away from business, but it was too late; she could not capture the love of her children; besides the fascination of business life was so strong that it pulled her back, much to her long-suffering husband's disappointment. Finally tragedy invaded that house which was not a home. The eldest boy was expelled from school, later married without his parents' consent, and wound up in prison; the daughter went wrong, and died miserably, while her younger brother shot the man who wronged her and then committed suicide. After all these disasters, Rosalie admitted to her husband that she had adopted the wrong kind of life principle, that a married woman's place is the home just because she is a woman.

#### Aunt Bella and Uncle Pyke Pounce.

To me the great charm of this story consists not in the social teaching which Mr. Hutchinson is at such pains to inculcate, nor in the plot which towards the close degenerates into melodrama, but in the vivid portrayal of character. In sketching highly individualised persons, this writer is master. Both in his style and in his skill in etching queer people he reminds me strongly of Dickens. Aunt Bella and Uncle Pyke Pounce might well have walked out of an unpublished story by immortal Charles. Listen to this glittering "It was at dinner at the glittering table in the splendid dining-room of the magnificent house in Notting Hill, Rosalie there on the half-term week-end of her last term, that the frightful thing was done. At dinner: Uncle Pyke Pounce bathing in his soup; beautiful Laetitia elegantly toying with hers; Aunt Bella beaming over her solid silver spoon at Rosalie. "Try that soup, dear child. It's delicious. My cook makes such delicious soups. Lady Houldsworth Hopper—Sir Humbo Houldsworth Hopper, you know he's in the India Office, you must have heard of him—was

dining with us last week and said she had never tasted such delicious soup. It was the same as this. I asked cook specially to make it for you." Doesn't that sound like Dickens? And watch Uncle Pyke Pounce when Rosalie announces that she wants to be a business woman. Isn't this just the way Dickens would carry on—"Uncle Pyke Pounce, holding his breath because he is holding his exasperation as one holds one's breath in performance of a delicate task; Uncle Pyke Pounce crimson, purple blotched, infuriated, kept from his food, blowing up at last at the parlormaid: 'Bring in the next course! Bring in the next course! Waterer staring at? Waterer waiting for? Waterer listening to? Rubbish. Pack off rubbish!'"

#### How to Eat a Herring.

The first four chapters of this novel are just bursting with humor. Feminists will no doubt chortle over this story as a whole and debate its thesis savagely, but everywoman will laugh loud and long over the author's pictures of the wonderful men and their masterful pride in the old-fashioned Victorian household! Father sharpening a pen! and father eating a herring are little classics on the vanity of man. Has any better picture of the head of a household showing off ever been written than this herring extract? "Herrings! Well, a herring is one of the most delicious fish, if it's eaten properly. There's a right way to eat a herring and a wrong way. Now watch me and I'll show you how to eat a herring, Rosalie, watch.

"Rosalie, dear, (from her mother) 'watch while your father shows you how to eat a herring.' "All eyes on father, demonstrating how to eat a herring! "And Rosalie used to notice this about the watching eyes. Her mother's eyes—most anxiously and nervously upon the operation, as if watching a thing she would soon be called upon to perform and would not be able to perform; the eyes of Robert (14) sulkily; of Flora (18) admiringly (it was getting to be a complaint in the family circle that Flora 'sucked up' to father); the eyes of Anna (20) wearily; the eyes of Harold (22) contemptuously.

"The herrings (a very frequent dish at the rectory, so much cheaper than meat) came headless to the table. First father slipped the tail with a firm, neat stroke. Then he deftly slit the herring down the stomach. It fell into two exact perfectly divided halves. Then he lifted one of the backbones, not one scrap of fish adhering to it, and laid it on the side of his plate. Then four firm pressures of his knife and the little lateral bones were exactly removed and exactly laid on the backbone. Next a precise insertion of his fork and out came the silvery strip known to Rosalie as 'the swimming thing' and was laid in its turn upon the bones, exactly neatly, as if it were a game of spilling. 'Now pepper, plenty of pepper for the roe, you see. There. Now.' "And in about six mouthfuls father's plate would be as clean as when it was brought in, decorated rather than marred by the exquisitely neat pile of the backbone, the tail, the little bones, and the silvery swimming thing. 'There! Delicious! That's the way to eat a herring; and he would direct a glance at the plate of Rosalie's mother. Rosalie's mother made a herring into the most frightful mess it was possible to imagine. She spent the whole of her time in removing bones from her mouth; and her plate, when she was half-way through, looked to contain the mangled remains of about two dozen herrings. 'Very few women know how to eat a herring,' Rosalie's father would say.

"Wonderful father! How to sharpen a pencil, how to eat a herring, how to do up a parcel, how to cut your finger nails, how to sit with regard to the light when you wrote or read, how to tie a knot, how to untie a knot. Clever father, natty father!"

#### Can a Woman Never Let Go?

Other unforgettable characters in this story are Mr. Simcox, the abundant letter-writer; Kegg, the whist-key-bibbing lady teacher in Rosalie's London school; and the patient husband Harry, with his eternal phrase, "Mumps and Measles." "This Freedom" is well worth reading just to make the acquaintance of these delightful people. Masterful, however, as he is in character portrayal, I am inclined to think that Mr. Hutchinson's knowledge of the female heart is not always satisfactory. I leave it to any woman reader of this story whether Rosalie could have fallen in love over-night with a man for whom she had a positive aversion. No doubt the psychologists would say this was a case of suppressed complex, but I refuse to believe it possible. Again, Mr. Hutchinson says over and over that when once a woman takes to a thing it becomes a craze, an obsession, a drug. If they take to a certain career in life and go deep enough, "they're in." He illustrates this in Rosalie's case, but this true to life? Are there not hundreds of women in every community who were once engrossed in nursing, teaching or business, but who gave up their work gladly at the call of love, and have never in subsequent years had a pang of regret for such a decision nor regarded themselves as having made a sacrifice for the sake of husband or children? Plenty of controversy will be stirred up by this story, but, after all, isn't it this thought-provoking quality which makes a novel great? —W. T. ALLISON.

#### Literary Notes.

Phil. H. Moore, author of "With Gun and Rod in Canada," left the Lawrence Scientific School, Harvard University, in 1899, and went to a

mine in North-Eastern Utah as junior engineer. He spent two years engineering and prospecting in the southwest of Mexico, then went east as manager of some gold mines in Nova Scotia. He joined the rush into Cobalt, Ont., in the same capacity. The year 1909 found him surveying from Cochrane, Ontario, to Moose Factory, a Hudson's Bay post on James Bay. Later he became manager of the Mining Department for the Canadian General Electric Company at Toronto, and for several years travelled all over Canada, and into many of its far corners, investigating new fields and their commercial possibilities in relation to the electrical apparatus that the company manufactured. He had previously been made a licensed guide in Nova Scotia, and having owned considerable property, has always kept up this connection with the Game Commissioners.

The negro and the savage are receiving a good deal of attention in books at the present time. It is pure chance that this is so, so far as can be seen. The books have happened to come along, that is all. Eugene O'Neill's wonderful drama, "The Emperor Jones," published in his volume of plays, has a negro for its chief character. The remarkable French novel, "Batouala," is now rendered into English, and published in a limited edition. A new novel of African native life, "Witch Doctors," by Charles Beadle, deals with native customs and worship—voodoo and magic making—and the heart of Africa. Here a strong drama is played out between two white men, the only whites in a territory of many square miles.

"Savages," a tale of life among the cannibals of the Solomon Islands, and relating the adventures of one Hurricane Williams, an outlawed sea captain, is another "native" novel just published. Gordon Young is the author.

"White and Black" is a novel of the negro problem today in the Southern States of America. Here the attitude, unlike other novels on the color problem in America, is very sympathetic to the man of color. It is a powerful novel, and does not hesitate to give what the author considers to be a true picture of white man's failure to understand the negro, or even to let him alone.

Sherwood Anderson, who was born at Camden, Ohio, in 1876, has seen many sides of life. At one time he was a laborer, then a soldier, and finally went into business. He was successful and made money but revolted against the routine and so began to write. His novel "Poor White" was published in England last year. This year Jonathan Cape has published "Winesburg Ohio" and "The Triumph of the Egg." The last-named was recently awarded the prize given by "The Dial" for the most important

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The surrendered bonds will be forwarded by banks to the Minister of Finance at Ottawa, where they will be exchanged for bonds of the new issue, in fully registered, or coupon registered or coupon bearer form carrying interest payable 1st May and 1st November of each year of the duration of the loan, the first interest payment accruing and payable 1st May, 1923. Bonds of the new issue will be sent to the banks for delivery immediately after the receipt of the surrendered bonds.

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W. S. FIELDING,  
Minister of Finance.

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